

CHAPTER 9-B

Pas de Deux Rules

General

Dressage pas de deux is an artistic program created by two riders to present their horses to best advantage in an artistic, musical context.

- It is judged according to the technical execution (performance as a pair, required elements, impulsion and submission), and the artistic impression (choreography, harmony between horses and riders, and musicality).
- It is performed in a standard dressage arena (20x60 m) unless otherwise specified in the prize list.
- A copy of the program is not submitted in advance.
- Current USDF score sheets must be used.
- Pas de deux may be offered at any level.

Time

- There is no minimum time requirement for any level. There is a maximum time limit of 5 minutes from Training through Intermediate, and a maximum of 6 minutes for the Grand Prix.
- Movements performed after the time limit has elapsed will not be scored. Two points will be deducted from the total points for artistic impression for exceeding the time limit.
- There is no minimum time limit.
- Pairs are to salute the judge at C at the beginning and end of the test. The program is timed and judged from the move off the initial halt and salute. Timing and judging will cease at the final salute.

Music

Music is mandatory. If the music source fails, the competitors may (time permitting and at the discretion of management) restart immediately, or be rescheduled to perform the pas de deux in its entirety later during the competition.

Judges

USDF pas de deux must be judged by an USEF-licensed dressage judge: “I” Training through Second Level; “R” Training through Fourth Level; “S” Training through Grand Prix.

Equipment and Turnout

- Whip: USEF-regulation whips are allowed in regular pas de deux classes. Management may restrict the use of whips in championship classes, if it is clearly stated in the prize list.
- Turnout: Attire and equipment must conform to USEF regulations, with the following exceptions:
 - Leg wraps may be used.
 - Costumes are allowed only in specially designated costume classes and only if specifically permitted in the prize list.
- Similarity of equipment and turn-out will be considered in the scoring.

Elements of a Dressage Test, Freestyle, or Pas de Deux

- *Dressage Movements*: An exercise as opposed to a figure, transition or a pattern. Dressage Movements are leg yields, rein-back, shoulder-in, travers, renvers, turn on haunches, half-pass (trot or canter), flying change, pirouette (walk or canter), piaffe, and passage.
- *Test Movements*: All of the elements to be scored in one box on a dressage test sheet.
- *Figures*: Geometrical component of a dressage test such as circle, change of rein, and figure-of-eight. Erroneously used interchangeably with “movements”.
- *Patterns*: Geometric design formed in the arena when movements, figures and transitions are combined.
- *Combinations*: Direct connection of any movement of figure with another movement or figure.
- *Transitions*: Changes between two different gaits or from one pace to another within the same gait.
- *Gaits*: Any of the various patterns of foot movements (or rhythms) of a horse such as walk, trot, pace, amble, canter or gallop. Walk, trot, and canter are gaits used in dressage.
- *Paces*:
 - 1. a. Named variations(s) within a gait (at walk; collected, medium, extended and free; at trot and canter: collected, working, medium, and characterized by a given length of stride, as well as by other attributes listed under the individual definitions of the various paces.
 - b. MPM with a gait as determined by stride, length while maintaining essentially the same tempo.
 - 2. A gait in which the lateral pairs of legs move in unison (not a dressage gait).

(There is obviously some overlap. As examples: a simple change is a test movement and a combination; a half-pass is a

dressage movement, but half-pass zigzag in trot is a pattern, and half-pass zigzag in canter with flying change is a combination.)

Requirements and Limitations

- Eligibility: The level entered may be not more than one level below the highest level at which the lower-level horse of the pair is showing at that show. For example, a Prix St. Georges horse and Second/Third Level horse may enter pas de deux competition no lower than Second Level.
- There are no qualifying requirements for pas de deux.
- Certain compulsory elements must be incorporated into the program, and must be shown by both horses. These are listed on the score sheet and mirror the requirements of the Freestyle test of the same level.
- Performing a dressage movement found in a higher level test than the one being declared is strictly forbidden
- Any figures, pattern, combinations, or transitions composed of elements permitted in the declared level are permitted. There are no limitations on shape, or combination of figures, even if the resulting configuration is found in higher levels.
- Following is a list of dressage movements (and some combinations and transitions) specifically permitted and forbidden at each level.

TRAINING LEVEL

- **Clearly Forbidden:**
- Any lateral work, counter-canter, simple changes, flying changes, rein back, turn-on-haunches or pirouette at walk or canter, piaffe, passage.
- **Clearly Allowed:**
Anything not clearly forbidden, 20-meter circle or smaller at trot, 20-meter circle or smaller at canter.

FIRST LEVEL

Clearly Forbidden:

Reinback, shoulder-in, travers, renvers, half-pass, flying changes, turn-on-haunches or pirouette at walk or canter, piaffe, passage.

Clearly Allowed:

Counter-canter (any configuration), zig-zag leg-yield, leg-yield along wall (like shoulder-in), lengthen trot or canter on 20-meter circle, canter serpentine, simple change, walk-canter-walk, halt-canter-halt, 10-meter circle or smaller at trot, 15-meter circle or smaller at canter, all figures including circles regardless of size.

SECOND LEVEL

Clearly Forbidden:

Half-pass, flying changes, pirouette at canter, piaffe, passage.

Clearly Allowed:

Full and double turn-on-haunches, renvers, travers, medium canter and trot on 20-meter circle, medium canter on diagonal, halt-canter-halt, 10-meter circle or smaller at canter .

THIRD LEVEL

Clearly Forbidden:

Tempi changes (4s, 3s, 2s, 1s) pirouette at canter, piaffe, passage.

Clearly Allowed:

Everything that is not clearly forbidden, including: half-pass zig-zag in trot, half-pass zig-zag in canter with flying changes, full and double walk pirouettes.

FOURTH LEVEL

Clearly Forbidden:

Full pirouette at canter, tempi changes (2s, and 1s), piaffe, passage.

Clearly Allowed:

Everything that is not clearly forbidden.

FEI

Follow FEI Prix St. Georges for Young Riders, Intermediate I, and Grand Prix freestyle score sheets for what is forbidden and allowed.

SCORING AND JUDGING

Understanding the score sheet:

- Six scores are given, in two categories: technical execution and artistic impression. Each score is multiplied by its coefficient.

Technical:

- Performance as a pair: Spacing, Alignment, Synchrony (coefficient 4)
- Required Elements - Quality of Execution (coefficient 3)
- Impulsion & submission (coefficient 3)

Artistic:

- Harmony between horses & riders, fluency of performance (coefficient 3)
- Choreography: balance, creativity, difficulty, construction (coefficient 5)
- Musicality (coefficient 2)

The scores are multiplied by their respective coefficients to give the total for each category.

Half points are allowed. Tenths are not allowed.

Failure to perform a required element will incur a deduction of one point for each omission. This deduction will be taken under Required Elements – Quality of Execution.

Deductions

- Inclusion of dressage movements clearly “above the level” will incur a penalty of four points from the total for technical execution. This deduction will be taken for each forbidden movement, but not for each recurrence of the same movement.
- Movements performed after the time limit has elapsed will not be scored, and a penalty of 2 points will be deducted from the Total Artistic Impression.

Ties

In case of a tie, the higher total for artistic impression will break the tie.

Pas de Deux Guidelines

**Music and Music Media Format
(Tape/CD Recordings)**

- Any type of music may be selected. The format for the pas de deux music should be tape or CD (preferably both for backup purposes). Final preparation of the music in a professional studio is recommended to ensure proper equalization, balance, and decibel levels.
- It is strongly recommended that music for a pas de deux ride be of one genre, style, or theme. Mixing musical genres within one program is not recommended.
- Strict tempo of music in relation to gaits is not required. However, for an effective pas de deux, the rhythm of the music should suit the horses’ gaits.
- Music that can be interpreted choreographically and create highlights is encouraged.
- Vocals are permitted.
- The music may begin before, while, or after the horses and the riders enter the arena. (It is advisable to arrange for entrance music as a check that the tape/CD is working.)
- A cohesive musical theme and construction will be scored higher than a disjointed mish-mash of musical selections.
- The music tape/CD should be cohesive. Editing should be fluid and smooth. Choppy or disruptive editing on the music tape will detract from the overall artistic impression.
- The music tape/CD should have only the pas de deux ride on it. The tape/CD should be clearly labeled (on the music side of the tape) with the competitors’ names, horses’ names, and the level of the ride.
- Always bring an extra copy of the music tape/CD to the competition. Mark it in the same way as the original, plus some additional notation indicating that it is a backup copy.
- Written instructions should be submitted with the music tape/CD stating: competitors’ names, horses’ names and show numbers, class number, time of ride, level of ride, plus a brief, clear explanation of when to push the “play” button at the start of the ride.
- Before giving the music tape/CD to the person who will run the sound equipment during the competition, cue it up so that the music is ready to play when the “play” button is pushed. (If help is needed, ask the advice of a sound technician.)
- Consult the competition prize list or the management for information about sound checks and to whom to give the tape/CD and instructions.
- Each competitor is permitted one representative in the sound system booth to supervise the handling of the tape/CD. This person should not interfere with the show announcer or management in any way.

- Evaluation of artistic merit should be based on these guidelines and on a broad artistic appreciation, not on mere personal preference (“I don’t like Mozart” or “Only classical music is appropriate”).
- According to Section 115 of the Copyright Act, a mechanical license should be obtained for the re-recording of music in any format. For information on obtaining a mechanical license it is recommended that the rider contact the National Music Publisher’s Association, Inc. at www.nmpa.org.
- Competitors should remember to pick up their music tapes/CDs before leaving the show.

Choreography

- The pair can include use of mirror image, side-by-side, and in-line positioning.
- The horses should be shown to best advantage, commensurate with the level of training, and maximizing their strengths.
- Creativity and degree of difficulty in the composition are rewarded.
- The beginning and end of the pas de deux should be executed facing C.
- The choreography should utilize the entire arena as imaginatively as possible, with a suitable balance between left and right.
- Figures and placement should be obvious to the judge and spectators, to avoid the impression of random meandering.
- The letters of the arena serve as markers only. Movements or figures need not be executed at the letters, nor on specific lines or at specific places. However, the construction should be clear as to intended placement, not random.

Competition Management

The Prize List:

- State level(s), and how results will be tabulated and awarded (combined levels, level of choice, etc.).
- State any deviation in arena size.
- State any limitation on carrying of a whip (championships only).
- State time and place of sound check.
- State when, where, and to whom the tape/CD and instruction should be delivered.

The Score Sheets:

- Current USDF score sheets must be used.

Judges:

- If possible, use at least two judges.
- If possible, all judges should be seated at the short end.

Time:

The rides should be timed with a stopwatch by someone appointed by competition management. The official timer should have no other duties during the pas de deux.

Schedule:

- A good pas de deux is an audience pleaser and may advantageously be scheduled for maximum audience participation.
- Consideration should be given in the scheduling so that the music does not interfere with activities in adjacent arenas and so that show announcements do not interfere with the music.

Sound and Sound System:

- Unless management can obtain a good, clear, loud sound system, pas de deux classes should not be offered. An unamplified portable tape/CD player at B does not supply sufficient sound quality or volume.
- If the dressage group or show facility does not have a good sound system, management should contact schools, clubs, stores, or children of members to rent, borrow, or buy equipment.
- Well ahead of the competition date, the sound system and acoustics of the facility should be checked. People should be placed at the location of each judge, in the spectator area, and in the arena to determine acoustical distortion and volume requirements of the area. (This will change somewhat when the area is filled with people and horses or in the event of wind or weather changes.)
- Competitors may request a sound check of their tape/CD.
- Management should determine and post schedule of time allowed for sound checks (with sound technicians) well in advance of the class.

USDF pas de deux score sheets are available from the USDF office.

USDF pas de deux and quadrille classes, like all other dressage classes, are recognized by USEF. USDF pas de deux and quadrille classes are expressly covered by the USEF rule book in Articles Dr 129, 120.9 and Dr 121.6. USEF Article 120.9 and

121.6 refers to the USDF Quadrille and Pas de Deux Guidelines for specific information regarding attire, saddlery, equipment and judging specifications for compulsory quadrille tests, freestyle quadrilles, special costume freestyle quadrilles, and pas de deux. Article 129 also states that current USDF rules must be followed.

USEF rules apply to all USDF/USEF-recognized competitions. All rules that would apply to dressage classes also apply to USDF pas de deux and quadrille classes, except where these classes are expressly exempted. Competitors should study the USEF rule book before entering USDF/USEF-recognized competitions.

